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President: Ms. Chatardová (Vice-President) ..... (Czechia)

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In the absence of Mr. Shava (Zimbabwe), Ms. Chatardová (Czechia), Vice-President, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Agenda item 20: United Nations research and training institutes (E/2017/48, E/2017/51 and E/2017/52; E/2017/L.18 and E/2017/L.19)

1. **Mr. Seth** (Executive Director of the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR)), introducing the report of the Secretary-General on UNITAR (E/2017/48), said that since the establishment of the Institute some 50 years previously, the scope of its programming had expanded to cover all areas of work of the United Nations, including peace and security, economic development, social progress and environmental sustainability. Progress had been made under the six programming areas of the 2014-2017 strategic framework and the Institute had generally received positive feedback from compliance and oversight mechanisms. Noting that one of the priorities of the Institute was "reaching the furthest first", he said that 50 per cent of its developing country learning-related beneficiaries were from small island developing States, landlocked developing countries and least developed countries. In addition, the Institute was focused on aligning its programming with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and improving its performance monitoring, evaluation and quality assurance frameworks and practices, in line with its efforts to become more efficient, effective and coherent.

2. **Mr. Javan** (Director of the United Nations System Staff College), introducing the report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations System Staff College (E/2017/52), said that the mission of the Staff College was to contribute to a more effective, results-oriented and agile United Nations system through relevant, innovative and engaging learning, training and knowledge dissemination. In its resolution 2015/9, the Economic and Social Council had recognized the continuing work of the Staff College to consolidate its central role in inter-agency learning, training and knowledge-sharing, in the light of the current efforts to equip the staff of the United Nations with the right knowledge and the skills necessary to respond to global challenges, including the implementation of the post-2015 development agenda.

3. The Staff College offered a growing number of courses on leadership, management, organizational change and innovation, communication and advocacy, safety and security, sustainable development and sustaining peace. In 2016 it had provided 122 learning activities, up from 84 the previous year, many of them organized in collaboration with external partners such as private sector organizations, non-governmental organizations and academic institutions. As an inter-agency institution, the Staff College had an unparalleled overview and a deep understanding of the United Nations system. Its efforts to invest in blended and technology-led training, collaborative tools, informal learning and individual coaching had reaped dividends, with the Staff College transforming itself into the main learning hub of the United Nations. The Staff College was in the process of developing its strategic plan for the period 2018-2021, which would continue to prioritize the transformative agenda.

4. **Mr. Cockayne** (Head of Office of the United Nations University in New York), introducing the report of the Council of the United Nations University on the work of the University (E/2017/51), said that the United Nations University conducted evidence-based research that addressed real-world concerns, with a view to providing credible and objective guidance towards solving the challenges facing humankind. It functioned as a problem-focused research institution, a think tank for the United Nations system and a postgraduate training and capacity development organization.

5. He highlighted the most salient parts of the report, providing an overview of the institutional structure of the United Nations University, its output and activities, its financial and human resources, and its institutional priorities for the future, including its strategic plan for the period 2015-2019. The strategic plan called on the United Nations University to focus its expertise and resources on topics that were of particular relevance to the United Nations and Member States, in areas in which it could make a significant contribution, and to make its research findings more visible and accessible to policymakers and United Nations officials. The plan also set out three key organizational priorities, namely, strengthening management, ensuring sustainable growth and streamlining partnerships. The University's other prioritized initiatives were promoting gender equality, including at the senior management level, and sustaining host country relationships.

6. **Mr. Cardi** (Italy) said that, with the adoption of the 2030 Agenda, the United Nations research and training institutes had become more important than ever. None of the Sustainable Development Goals could be considered the exclusive mandate of a single United Nations entity and equally none of the Goals could be excluded from the work of any United Nations entity. Similarly, the Organization's core

objectives of promoting peace and security, respect for human rights and sustainable development could not be pursued independently of one another. In that connection, the United Nations must integrate its operations and build a common organizational and management culture, with a view to creating an organization that was fit for purpose and able to deliver as one. The United Nations System Staff College had a fundamental role to play in that regard, thanks to its unique inter-agency and system-wide mandate. The Staff College, which had established itself as a centre of excellence within the United Nations system, should serve as a source of inspiration for management and organizational transformation, which was of critical importance for the effective and efficient delivery of the Organization's mandate.

7. **Mr. Aliyev** (Azerbaijan) said that UNITAR was an extremely effective organization. A great many delegates, from both developing and developed countries, had benefited from training in New York and Geneva, as well as in the field. The Institute had high-quality outputs, such as its e-learning course on the role of the private sector in the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals and its new mobile application "UN — How to".

8. **Ms. Schmid-Luebbert** (Germany) said that her country was proud to host the newly established United Nations System Staff College Knowledge Centre for Sustainable Development. The Staff College carried out excellent work and Germany would continue to support it and the Knowledge Centre for Sustainable Development, with a particular focus on learning, training and knowledge management in the context of the 2030 Agenda and the Paris Agreement under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. Indeed, the 2030 Agenda required new approaches to knowledge and skills development for all actors. There was a need to move beyond separate mandates and structures and explore linkages between different thematic issues, and also to promote lifelong learning. The Staff College, which advocated a holistic approach to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, deserved the strong support of Member States.

9. **Mr. Lawrence** (United States of America) said that training and research were of fundamental importance for achieving the universal aspiration of a more peaceful and prosperous world. Noting the importance of improving the coherence, efficiency and effectiveness of the United Nations system, he said that the United States welcomed the efforts of the Staff College to integrate the principles of organizational change and knowledge management into its work. Like the Staff College, delegations should prioritize organizational change and contribute to improving the effectiveness and coherence of the United Nations system. He also commended the innovative approach of UNITAR, which was providing cost-effective training through partnerships with universities and civil society, thereby ensuring that all delegations were equipped with the tools needed to bring about reform and achieve shared goals.

10. **Mr. Al Mutawa** (United Arab Emirates) said that his country welcomed the efforts of UNITAR to realign its programmes with the 2030 Agenda, including by offering capacity-building and training to help Member States translate the Sustainable Development Goals into national development plans and strategies. The Institute's vision statement, drawn up in preparation for its 2018-2021 strategic framework, would help it to respond to the changing needs of its stakeholders.

11. Innovation was a key driver of growth and competitiveness, and one of the overarching themes guiding his Government's work. The United Arab Emirates welcomed, therefore, the Institute's decision to make innovation one of its guiding principles. He urged the Institute to continue building and strengthening partnerships with all stakeholders, in particular academic institutions, as such partnerships enabled UNITAR to capitalize on the latest academic and research findings and share knowledge and best practices on pedagogical and training methods.

12. **Mr. Ríos Sánchez** (Observer for Mexico) said that the United Nations University had played an important role in the preparations for the thirtieth special session of the General Assembly on the world drug problem, held in 2016, the drafting of research papers and the holding of discussion forums to identify areas of common ground. Such activities had been extremely useful for Member States and had helped to enrich the outcome document of the special session, entitled "Our joint commitment to effectively addressing and countering the world drug problem".

13. On 1 January 2017, the United Nations University Rector had assumed the Chair of the Global Migration Group. During the negotiations of the global compact for safe, orderly and regular migration, Member States would need access to up-to-date, innovative and objective information, data and research. The United Nations University was well placed to make a valuable contribution in that regard.

Draft resolution E/2017/L.18: United Nations System Staff College in Turin, Italy

14. **The President** said that the draft resolution had no programme budget implications.

15. *Draft resolution E/2017/L.18 was adopted.*

Draft resolution E/2017/L.19: United Nations Institute for Training and Research

16. **The President** said that the draft resolution had no programme budget implications.

17. **Mr. Mebarki** (Algeria), introducing the draft resolution, said that Azerbaijan, Colombia, Italy, Lebanon and South Africa had become sponsors of the draft resolution. His Government had led the coordination of the drafting process because it firmly believed that training and research were essential for development. Noting that it was important to capitalize on the experience of UNITAR, he called on the Institute to work more closely with all United Nations funds, programmes and specialized agencies and to forge partnerships with relevant stakeholders, including at the country level. While the Institute's financial situation was stable, UNITAR remained dependent on a small number of donors, including Algeria, and he urged more Member States to provide voluntary contributions to the Institute.

18. **Mr. Alessawi** (Iraq) said that UNITAR had played a pioneering role since its establishment in 1963. He commended the Institute on the progress made in implementing its 2014-2017 strategic framework, including capacity-building and strengthening the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. UNITAR should continue responding to the training needs of Member States and harmonizing those activities with the 2030 Agenda. The Institute should also strengthen its partnerships with United Nations entities, academic institutions and all other stakeholders.

19. *Draft resolution E/2017/L.19 was adopted.*

20. **The President** said she took it that the Council wished to take note of the report of the Council of the United Nations University on the work of the University (E/2017/51).

21. *It was so decided.*

The meeting rose at 11.15 a.m.